

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 126109
ORIGIN NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AF-04 EUR-08 SP-02 INR-05
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DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:TSWILKINSON:PAW
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STF:LDJUNIOR
NEA/AFN:JKBISHOP

-----018147 181621Z /75

R 181426Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY RABAT
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MADRID

S E C R E T STATE 126109

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PEPR, MO, MR, SS, CG

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR BENGELLOUN ON KING
HASSAN'S VIEWS ON F-5 DEPLOYMENTS; SITUATION IN ZAIRE

REF: STATE 117714

1. F-5 DEPLOYMENTS: MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR BENGELLOUN BRIEFED
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VELIOTES MAY 16 ON INSTRUCTIONS
HE HAD RECEIVED LATE LAST WEEK FROM KING. BENGELLOUN
CLEARLY INDICATED THAT HASSAN HAS NO CURRENT INTENTION OF
REMOVING U.S.-ORIGIN F-5 AIRCRAFT FROM WESTERN SAHARA
AND MAURITANIA. BENGELLOUN SAID THAT AFTER MAY 3 MEETING
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WITH UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM HE HAD DRAWN KING'S PERSONAL
ATTENTION TO U.S. VIEWS, AND HAD NOW RECEIVED KING'S
GENERAL REACTION. HE SAID THAT KING HASSAN VIEWED F-5
PROBLEM IN OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY
RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., WHICH KING VERY MUCH WANTED TO
MAINTAIN. IN THIS CONTEXT, KING WISHED U.S. ADMINISTRATION
TO KNOW THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT SADAT'S

EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THAT HIS COUNTRY HAD NO AGGRESSIVE INTENT AGAINST ANY NATION, AND THAT MOROCCO INTENDS TO RESPECT ALL ITS ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE U.S. THE KING HAD PERSONALLY REVIEWED THE U.S.-MOROCCAN BILATERAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT, AND SAW OCCASIONAL

MOROCCAN DEPLOYMENTS OF F-5'S IN THE WESTERN SAHARA AND MAURITANIA AS STRICTLY DEFENSIVE AND THEREFORE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT OF THE AGREEMENT. HE HAD ASKED BENGELLOUN TO EXPLAIN THAT "WHEN WE GIVE AID TO MAURITANIA, IT IS ONLY TO DEFEND OUR OWN TERRITORY AND SECURITY."

2. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, VELIOTES EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR QUICK RESPONSE FROM KING AND FOR EMPHASIS ON MAINTAINING EXCELLENT BILATERAL RELATIONS, BUT EXPLAINED ONCE AGAIN THAT U.S. INTERPRETATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT DOES NOT PERMIT DEPLOYMENT OF F-5'S TO DEFEND TERRITORY OTHER THAN THAT OF "KINGDOM OF MOROCCO" AS IT EXISTED PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 1976. ASKED IF HE WISHED TO SHED FURTHER LIGHT ON MOROCCAN INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT, BENGELLOUN SAID HE HAD NOT GONE INTO SUCH DETAILS IN HIS COMMUNICATIONS WITH KING HASSAN, BUT THAT "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL ANY HIGH MOROCCAN OFFICIALS THAT THE SAHARA IS NOT A PROVINCE OF MOROCCO." BENGELLOUN SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY F-5'S WERE IN MAURITANIA NOW, BUT ADDED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION.

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VELIOTES THANKED BENGELLOUN FOR BRIEFING AND PROMISED TO PASS ON KING'S VIEWS TO WHITE HOUSE AND TO SECRETARY VANCE, BUT AS INITIAL REACTION EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT KING'S POSITION ON DEPLOYMENT OF THE F-5'S MEANS THAT THIS ISSUE REMAINS A PROBLEM IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. ZAIRE: AFTER AFN DIRECTOR BISHOP BRIEFED BENGELLOUN ON OUR LATEST INFO ON SITUATION IN KATANGA, LATTER EXPRESSED HOPE THAT INTERCESSION OF U.S. ADMINISTRATION WITH CONGRESS WOULD LEAD TO PROMPT U.S. ASSISTANCE TO BELEAGUERED FAZ. HE SPECULATED THAT CUBANS AND SOVIETS HELPING POLISARIO (SEE REFTEL) COULD BE LINKED WITH ALLEGED ALGERIAN ROLE IN PLANNING/TRAINING FOR CURRENT KATANGA INSURRECTION, SINCE SOVIETS WERE CLEARLY USING ALL THEIR "PAWNS" IN AFRICA TO BRING DOWN ZAIRE REGIME. AFTER ZAIRE, NEXT SOVIET TARGETS WOULD BE SUDAN, EGYPT, AND SAUDI ARABIA. VANCE

DISSIMINATION COORDINATED WITH SS/O PER MR.ROGER HART.

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NNN

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